

DOMESTIC CRIMES

Domestic crimes include all offenses committed against family members, spouses and ex-spouses, roommates, and romantic partners and ex-romantic partners. Underreporting is a serious problem when it comes to domestic crimes (domestic violence experts estimate that the police department receives a report for only 33 percent of domestic crimes), so the reliability of these figures is uncertain.

Any crime among individuals with a domestic relationship is considered a domestic crime. There were 918 domestic incidents reported in 2004. Note that underreporting is a major factor in these statistics. The police are **not** always the first to be called in domestic cases, as is commonly the case with other crime types. Victims of abuse often seek assistance from a local battered women's shelter, a court, a hospital, or a friend before calling the police.

The majority of domestic calls that Cambridge officers do respond to involve loud arguments, classified as "**domestic disputes**." In 2004, these calls made up 36% of all domestic reports. While not technically a crime, these domestic disturbances can still be a form of abuse, and they may escalate into more serious offenses if they go unaddressed.

Domestic violence is the most serious type of domestic crime. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, these crimes take many shapes and "...may include emotional abuse, economic abuse, sexual abuse, using children, threats, using male privilege, intimidation, isolation, and a variety of other behaviors used to maintain fear, intimidation and power" (<http://www.ncadv.org/problem/what.htm>). While domestic violence is commonly thought of as violence against women, men and children also commonly fall victim. Domestic violence crosses all socio-economic, racial, ethnic, religious, sexual-orientation, and age boundaries. What analysis has identified, however, is that we respond to more calls in communities where individuals live in close quarters, and where neighbors contact the police for assistance.

The most common type of violent domestic incidents reported in Cambridge involves **simple assaults**-assaults without a weapon and with no serious injuries - (24% of all incidents). Aggravated assaults made up another 9%.

CATEGORICAL BREAKDOWN OF DOMESTIC INCIDENTS	Total Reports 2004	% of Total Domestic Reports*
Dispute/Disturbance with No Physical Abuse	330	36 %
Simple Assault	222	24 %
Aggravated Assault	84	9 %
Violation of a Restraining Order	80	9 %
Threats to Commit a Crime	76	8 %
Harassment	25	3 %
Housebreak	23	3 %
Malicious Destruction of Property	22	2 %
Larceny	21	2 %
Harassing or Obscene Telephone Calls	14	2 %
Check Forgery	10	1 %
Robbery	5	.5 %
Auto Theft	3	.3 %
Indecent Assault	2	.1 %
Stalking	1	.1 %
Murder	0	0%
Kidnapping	0	0 %
Rape	0	0 %
Annoying and Accosting	0	0 %
Total	918	100 %*

*Note that due to rounding percentages will not equal 100%

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2002, The National Crime Prevention Council, better known as the "McGruff, Take A Bite out of Crime" program, recognized the Cambridge Domestic "Violence-Free Zone" as one of its top "50 Strategies to Prevent Domestic Crimes." Selected from thousands of programs sponsored by the most progressive non-profits, law enforcement agencies and grassroots community groups, the Cambridge initiative was singled out for its long-term citywide approach to preventing the nation's fastest-growing crime. "Here in Cambridge, we decided to involve the entire city government in a ten-year campaign to influence how people think of and act on domestic violence," said Nancy Ryan, Director of the Women's Commission. "With the support of the City Manager, the Cambridge Health Alliance, the Police and School Departments, we have begun to work with employees and community groups to challenge the acceptance of violence in families and relationships."

-For more information regarding domestic violence, please go to <http://www.cambridgepolice.org>

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

You are not alone, but please understand that domestic abuse generally gets worse and occurs more frequently when victims do not seek help. There is help available, either through the Cambridge Police Department's Domestic Violence Unit or through a local battered women's shelter. At the very least, seek help from a family member or friend, and create a safety plan for you and your children.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Cambridge Police Department's Domestic Violence Unit 617-349-3371

Shelters:

- Transition House (*shelter in Cambridge*)..... 617-661-7203
- Renewal House (*shelter in Boston*)..... 617-566-6881

Counseling:

- Respond (*shelter in Somerville*) 617-623-5900
- Dating Violence Intervention Project (*teen dating violence*). 617-868-5401

Legal Services:

- Community Legal Services Center..... 617-661-1010
- Cambridge/Somerville Legal Services..... 617-494-1800

Children who have witnessed domestic violence and/or victims:

- The Guidance Center..... 617-354-2275

Elder Abuse Services and reporting..... 800-922-2275

Battered Lesbians and Bisexual Women Project..... 617-695-0877

Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project..... 800-832-1901

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE AN ABUSER

Learn to recognize your behavior for what it is. If you assault your spouse, romantic partner, children, or other family members, you need to seek help.

Likewise, if you insult, threaten, blame, feel you need to control your spouse or romantic partner, or destroy things during arguments, you should seek assistance. Your behavior may escalate into violence.

THERE IS HELP FOR MEN WHO ABUSE:

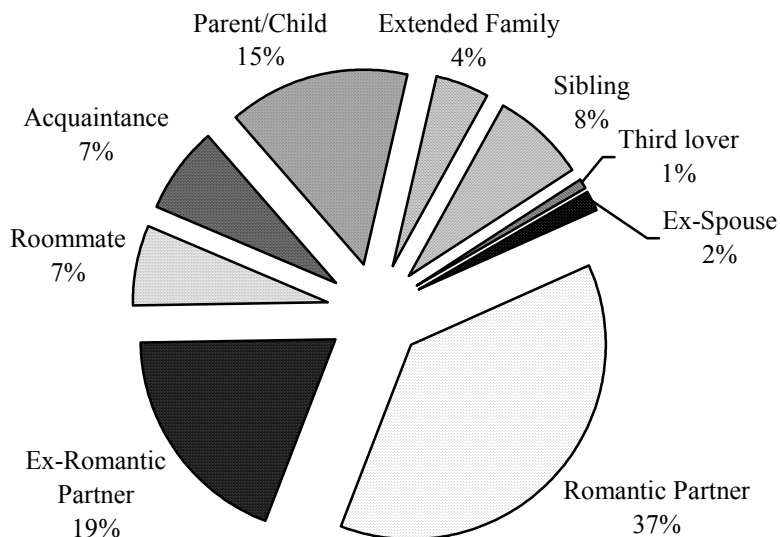
- Emerge..... 617-547-9879
- Common Purpose 617-597-7230

Both of these services provide counseling and treatment for abusers.

Remember:

- You are responsible for what you say or do.
- Your spouse or partner did not make you hit her or him.
- You can change the way you act.
- There is no excuse for abuse.

Domestic Violence by Relationship Type, 2004



UNDERSTANDING THE SYSTEM

POLICE RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS

An incident occurs



911 (police) is called



A police/incident report is taken



→ If the victim is assaulted and the batterer is at the scene s/he is arrested



The case is assigned to the Detective's Unit

**If the report is taken during the day, a night detective is assigned and if the report is taken during the nights, a day detective is assigned.



The detective will then take the case to court or get a warrant issued depending on the seriousness and history of the incident (for instance if it is an ongoing problem).



APPLYING FOR A RESTRAINING ORDER

Between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.:

During these times, a restraining order must be applied for at the Cambridge District Court on the 14th floor at the Victim Witness Office. This type of restraining order is called a Temporary Restraining Order and is good for ten days.

After 5:00 p.m., on a Friday night, on the Weekend, or on a holiday:

During these times, a restraining order must be applied for at the Cambridge Police Department. This type of restraining order is called an Emergency Restraining Order and is good until the next court business day, usually a Monday or the day after a holiday.

ONCE THE RESTRAINING ORDER IS ISSUED

In order for the restraining order to be in effect, it has to be served in hand to the defendant. If the Temporary Restraining Order is not served it can be continued for another ten days.



Once one appears in court for the Temporary Restraining Order, the order can be granted for a year.



Once the year is up, one may have the restraining order granted for another year or ask to be granted a Permanent Restraining Order that will remain in effect indefinitely.

GOING TO COURT

Once a detective is assigned to the case, s/he will file for a hearing or for a complaint in court:

*During a hearing, the defendant and the victim will be in the presence of a clerk magistrate. The detective assigned to the case will start the hearing by reading the police report that was taken and disclose any crucial information that was given to them in reference to the case. The victim will give their story, followed by the defendant. The clerk magistrate will decide whether there is enough to go forward with the complaint. This step is only for misdemeanor crimes, if it is a felony charge, it will automatically go to the next step.

* When a complaint is made, the defendant will appear in front of the judge. The judge will hear the victim's story and the defendant's before deciding if there is enough to go forward with an arraignment.

*During the arraignment, the judge will determine whether there is enough to charge the defendant with any crime(s). The defendant will have a 58A hearing that will determine whether s/he is a threat to society. If not, s/he will be released, but if so, s/he will be held until the trial date.

*The trial will be either by jury or bench and if the defendant is found guilty, s/he will have a sentencing hearing and then be sentenced. Once s/he is in jail, the victim in the case can be asked to be notified of a release date or other information they would want to know regarding the defendant, such as programs they are participating in.